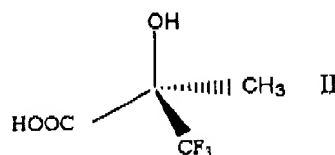
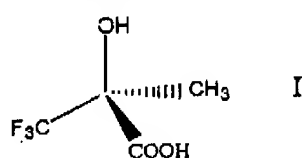


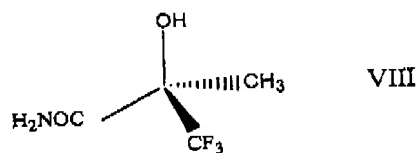
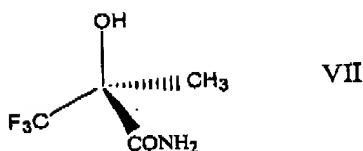
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PATENTCLAIM AMENDMENTS:Listing of the Claims:

Claims 1-27 (cancelled).

28. (previously presented) A process for the preparation of (S) - or (R) -3, 3, 3-trifluoro-2-hydroxy-2-methylpropionic acid of the formula:



or of (R) - or (S) -3, 3, 3-trifluoro-2-hydroxy-2-methylpropionamide of the formula



comprising converting propionamide of the formula



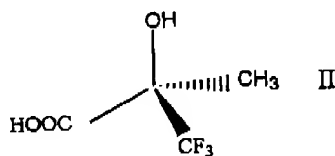
into a compound of the formula I, II, VII or VIII using:

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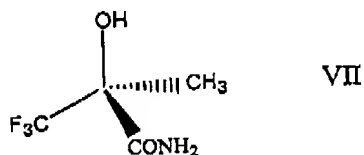
- (a) the microorganism of claim 41 or 42; or
(b) the cell extract of claim 43 or 44.

29. (previously presented) The process of claim 28 further comprising the step of isolating a compound of the formula I, II, VII or VIII.

30. (previously presented) A process for the preparation of (R) -3, 3, 3-trifluoro-2-hydroxy-2-methylpropionic acid of the formula:

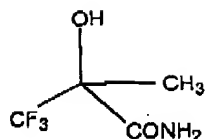


or of (S) -3, 3, 3-trifluoro-2-hydroxy-2-methyl-propionamide of the formula



comprising converting propionamide of the formula

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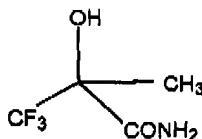
VI

into the compound of the formula II utilizing the microorganism of claim 41 or

42.

31. (previously presented) The process of claim 30 further comprising the step of isolating the compound of formula II or formula VII.

32. (previously presented) The process of claim 30 wherein said microorganism contains a nucleic acid molecule encoding a polypeptide having aminohydrolase activity wherein said polypeptide hydrolyzes (R) -3, 3, 3-trifluoro-2-hydroxy-2-methylpropionamide of the formula:



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33. (previously presented) The process of claim 32 wherein said nucleic acid molecule encodes the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

34. (previously presented) The process of claim 32 wherein said nucleic acid molecule is selected from the group consisting of:

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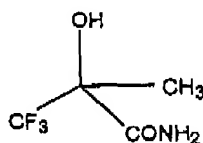
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- (a) a nucleic acid molecule comprising the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (b) a nucleic acid molecule comprising the sequence complementary to SEQ ID NO:1; and
- (c) a nucleic acid molecule which hybridizes under stringent hybridization conditions to SEQ ID NO:1;

wherein said nucleic acid molecule encodes a polypeptide with stereospecific amidohydrolase activity.

35. (previously presented) The process of claim 30 wherein the microorganism is selected from the group consisting of the species *Klebsiella oxytoca* PRS1 (DSM 11009), *Klebsiella oxytoca* PRS1K17 (DSM 11623), *Klebsiella planticola* ID-624 (DSM 11354), and *Klebsiella pneumoniae* ID-625 (DSM 11355).

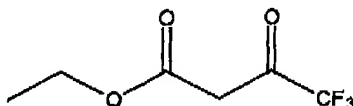
36. (currently amended) The process of claim 28 or 30 characterized in that the propionamide of the formula



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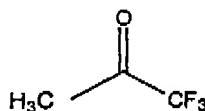
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is prepared by converting, in a first step, trifluoroacetate of the formula



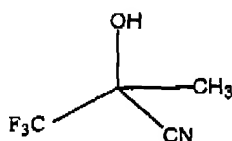
III

into trifluoroacetone of the formula



IV

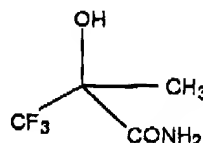
using a mineral acid, converting the former, in the second step, into the
propionitrile of the formula



V

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using a cyanide, and converting the former, in the third step, into the
propionamide of the formula



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(a) chemically using concentrated mineral acid; or (b) ~~biologically using~~
~~microorganisms of the genus *Rhodococcus*.~~

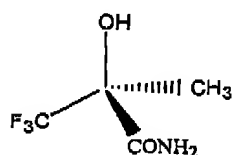
37. (previously presented) The process of claim 36 wherein said mineral acid is
selected from the group consisting of: sulphuric acid, phosphoric acid and nitric acid.

38. (previously presented) The process of claim 36 wherein said cyanide is an
alkali metal cyanide.

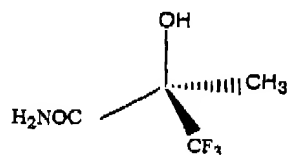
39. (canceled)

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40. (currently amended) The process of claims 28 or 30, characterized in that the (S) - or (R) -3, 3, 3-trifluoro-2-hydroxy-2-methylpropionamide of the formula



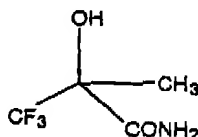
VII



VIII

is hydrolysed to the compound of the formula I or II (a) chemically in the presence of a base or (b) biologically ~~using microorganisms of the genus *Rhodococcus*~~ utilizing the microorganism of claim 41 or 42.

41. (previously presented) A biologically pure culture of a microorganism wherein said microorganism utilizes propionamide of the formula:

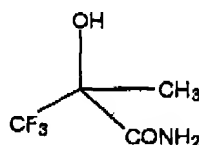


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in the form of the racemate or of its optically active isomers as the sole nitrogen source; and wherein said microorganism is selected from the group consisting of the *genus Arthrobacter*, *Bacillus*, *Klebsiella* and *Pseudomonas*.

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42. (previously presented) A biologically pure culture of a microorganism wherein said microorganism utilizes propionamide of the formula:

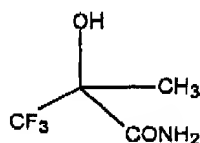


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in the form of the racemate or of its optically active isomers as the sole nitrogen source; and wherein said microorganism is selected from the group consisting of the species *Klebsiella oxytoca* PRS1 (DSM 11009), *Klebsiella oxytoca* PRS1K17 (DSM 11623), *Arthrobacter ramosus* ID-620 (DSM 11350), *Bacillus* sp. ID-621 (DSM 11351), *Klebsiella planticola* ID-624 (DSM 11354), *Klebsiella pneumoniae* ID-625 (DSM 11355) and *Pseudomonas* sp. (DSM 11010).

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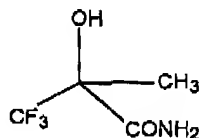
43. (previously presented) A cell extract derived from a biologically pure culture of a microorganism wherein said microorganism utilizes propionamide of the formula:



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in the form of the racemate or of its optically active isomers as the sole nitrogen source; and wherein said microorganism is selected from the group consisting of the genus *Arthrobacter*, *Bacillus*, *Klebsiella* and *Pseudomonas*.

44. (previously presented) A cell extract derived from a biologically pure culture of a microorganism wherein said microorganism utilizes propionamide of the formula:



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in the form of the racemate or of its optically active isomers as the sole nitrogen source; and